

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– A software process within the BPA identifies single or multiple agents required to inspect and approve or disallow each partially or fully completed task and to provide those agents with a process for correcting bills and reporting the results of their inspections and their approvals or disapprovals to the paying entities.–

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– Retention: Billing entities and paying entities frequently agree that portions of monies owed to billing entities for each billing period may be withheld from the progress payments, even if work has been done properly and approved by the authorizing entities. Under a typical agreement, these “retention” amounts are paid upon completion of the project and not as an increasing incentive to performing entities to complete their work. Referring to Fig. 15, it is seen that the BPA will calculate the retention. If queried to do so for an entity 512, the BPA sums the billed tasks amounts and multiplies that sum by a retention percentage 514. The amount is stored in memory 516. As an adjunct to the retention calculation the BPA ~~calculated~~ calculates a fee for a bill. As seen in Fig. 17 upon being queried to do so 712, the BPA sums the billed task amounts and multiplies that sum by a fee percentage 714. The fee is stored in memory 716. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– Discount: A billing entity typically submits a bill to a paying entity for payment. According to the invention the bill may be reduced by a discount amount. Thus, as shown in Fig. 16, if the BPA is queried to figure a discount for a bill 612, the BPA calculates a discount amount based on the billed total amount submitted by the billing entity 614, and ~~stored~~ stores the discount amount in memory 618. The BPA calculates a discounted bill total amount by subtracting the discount amount from the billed total amount. –

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– Forms: The BPA creates and uses several forms which facilitate and control interactive communications between a user, such as a billing entity, authorizing entity, or paying entity, and the BPA. The BPA facilitates collection and organization of information for storage in memory by creating a variety of templates. Each template is organized into informational fields coordinated with the structure of data sets in computer memory. The templates are populated with information appropriate for the recipient and the purpose of the template. For example, progress billing forms incorporate the prior billing history of the billing entity on the project to make the job progress readily apparent. Forms are uniquely generated for each entity based on identity and historical information, such as specific ~~tasks~~ task costs. The following are representative of the types of forms that are used. A person familiar with the art would

understand that the invention could process other form styles. –

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 31, line 12, with the following rewritten paragraph (please indent the new paragraph):

– An alternate embodiment of the invention is shown in FIG. 9. FIG 9 illustrates the process from the billing and paying entities' perspective (the process from the BPA's and authorizing entities' perspective is shown in FIG 11). This implements the aspects of FIGS. 5 and 7 along with the additional aspect in FIG. 6. The additional steps include 5020: Each billing entity transmitting various Claims ~~Release~~ Release forms to the BPA, and ~~5050~~ 5055: The BPA transmitting Claims Release Reports directly to each paying entity, thereby bypassing the hierarchy in claims release aspect as well as the billing and payment aspects. –

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– 1b. Paying Entity(ies) ~~cause~~ causes billing entities (Tiers 2 through N) and authorizing entities to be selected as part of the Hierarchical Business Structure that will complete the project. Each authorizing entity accesses the BPA and inputs information using the Authorizing Entity Identification Form 1012. Each billing entity accesses the BPA and inputs information using the Billing Entity Identification Form 1014 and the Task Identification and Cost Form 1016. –

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 11, with the following

rewritten paragraph:

– 1c. The BPA selects each authorizing entity to review 1030 the completed Task Identification and Cost Form(s) and notify billing entities of changes to the definitions of "tasks" as may be required to comport with the definition of "tasks" ~~in this specification above.~~ –

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

– 2. Each Billing Entity completes "tasks(s)," partially or completely, resulting in billing event(s) in accordance with the project billing agreement(s) with the Paying Entity(ies). Each billing entity independently submits billing statements directly to the BPA using the Progress Billing Form ~~directly to the BPA~~ 1025. –

Please replace the bulleted paragraph beginning at page 32, line 11, with the following rewritten bulleted paragraph:

– Provides better policing of the project with regard to mechanic's ~~lien~~ liens and other claims. The speedy and accurate releasing of mechanic's lien and other claims is highly valuable to property owners such as homeowner-consumers who do not understand this legal process or the administrative requirements. The added accuracy of identifying and releasing every claim associated with every task provides greater security and control to the property owner. –